



Lynn Public Schools

Nutrition & Health Tidbits

MAY 2016

May Food Focus: Berries

Most people want to eat foods that are eye-catching, and berries certainly fit the bill with their bright colors and unique shapes! The berry family includes: strawberries, blueberries, cranberries, gooseberries, currants, mulberries, blackberries and raspberries. Berries are a great option for someone who wants a healthy snack but also satisfy that sweet tooth!

GROCERY STORE TIP:

In the produce aisle, shop for berries when they are in season, as the price will reflect if they are not. When berries aren't in season, dehydrated or dried berries are a great option to add to your favorite salad or parfait. Frozen berries can be a great go-to choice that is cost-effective and convenient year round. When selecting frozen berries, be sure to choose packages that do not contain added sugar as an ingredient.

COOKING WITH BERRIES:

With the variety of ways to eat your berries—either fresh, frozen or dried, add your berries to yogurt parfaits, salads and cereals. Dried berries add a great sweet addition to trail mix, or cooked into stews and meat dishes. Or even indulge in something sweet by pairing fresh berries with whipped coconut cream as a healthy dessert option!

HEALTH BENEFITS:

Because of their vibrant colors, berries are packed full of important vitamins and minerals like vitamin C, antioxidants and fiber. These nutrients are beneficial in building a strong immune system, controlling blood sugar and protecting yourself against cancer. Shoot for eating 1/2 cup of berries every day, so eat up!

FUN FACT:

Did you know that early American colonists would make grey paint by boiling blueberries in milk?! Now that's a way to make art with food!

Growing Healthy Minds w/ School Gardening

This past month was both National Garden Month and Earth Month, which makes perfect sense that we take the time to highlight the gardens that are found directly within some of our very own schools in Lynn. With spring in full swing, garden planning, planting and growing is starting to gear up! Callahan, Ingalls, Ford and Breed are among some of the schools who currently have gardens, and plan to start growing plants that can provide an educational resource outside of the classroom, as well as inside of the classroom. Students and volunteers are already participating in activities that are making small positive changes, such as digging and laying dirt, and planting the first seeds and



plants. Some of the plants and seeds these various school gardens are planning to plant range from herbs, squash, beans, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, and even flowers. In addition, Lynn Public School's Food Services team will be collaborating with FoodCorp members on ways to coordinate nutrition education and taste testings with some of the items grown, to help build greater success and sustainability of these gardens! We are looking forward to educating and exposing our students to the true farm to table experience! Stay tuned for these highlights during late spring, and next fall to see the outcome of the hard work put in by students, staff and volunteers.



How to Deal w/ a Picky Eater

Getting kids to eat healthy is easier said than done, but it is a concern for a lot of us because we know that good nutrition is a critical need in order for them to fully develop. As parents and caregivers, the right steps can start by first build the foundations for a positive, healthy relationship with food, as well as coming to terms that picky eating is a natural phase for kids. Here are some helpful tips to pass along:

1. **Involve kids in the cooking process**—allow them to wash, sort, peel or mix different ingredients so they feel like they helped contribute to what they will be eating for their next meal.
2. **Grow your own food**—teaching kids about growing their own food not only is a great educational tool, but it also helps increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables because they like to reap the benefits of what they grew!
3. **Don't reward or punish your child with food.**
4. **Make art w/ food**—make meal time a creative time, by making different shapes out of foods to expand their exposure and appreciation of different foods.
5. **Creative menuing**—name the meal or food in a way that sounds appealing to a child. For instance, instead of saying we are having "broccoli and dip" for a snack, how about "dinosaur tree dippers"!
6. **You provide and the child decides**—as a parent, you are responsible for determining the type and nutrition quality of the food you provide, but leave it up to your child to decide what and whether they eat or not.

Blueberry, Chai and Granola Smoothie Bowl

Serving Size: 2

Ingredients:

- 2 cups almond milk or coconut milk
- 1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries
- 3 TBSP ground chia seeds
- 2 chai tea bags (remove spices from tea bags)
- 1 TSP vanilla extract
- 1/2 TBSP honey (optional)
- 1/4 cup granola

Instructions:

1. Add milk, blueberries, chia seeds, vanilla and honey to blender.
2. Cut open chai tea bags and pour spices into the blender with all other ingredients.
3. Blend until smooth.
4. Pour contents into a bowl and top with granola.
5. Serve and enjoy!

Try these add-ons to change up your smoothie: cinnamon, nuts, coconut flakes, raw cocoa nibs, or your favorite berry of choice!



Let's Focus on Strawberries!

- * **Strawberries are packed full of vitamin C, folate and potassium. Not only do they taste great, but these nutrients help support memory and good brain health.**
- * **Did you know that there are over 200 tiny seeds on one single strawberry!**
- * **Strawberries do not require a lot of space or depth to grow, which makes them great for school or home gardens. Strawberries are also perennials, meaning that they grow for more than one year.**



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May is National Asparagus Month!

Take May as the perfect opportunity to try asparagus for your next meal or snack! Although it may not be our #1 choice for a vegetable, it can be enjoyed in a lot of different dishes, and of course has several nutrition benefits. Being coined as one of the healthiest vegetables due to its dark green color and fibrous texture, asparagus is packed full of antioxidants, vitamin B, A and C. All of these vitamins and nutrients are known to help with anti-aging, and the prevention of cancer and disease. So eat up and try out some of these fresh, new ideas to enjoy asparagus:

- Chop and sauté it up in your next stir fry dish
- Serve it for breakfast—top whole wheat toast with roasted asparagus and soft boiled eggs
- Eat it raw in a salad, or with a dip such as hummus or plain Greek yogurt mixed with lemon, dill, salt and pepper
- Roast up asparagus with salt, pepper, minced garlic and fresh grated parmesan cheese for a side dish that will please anyone

